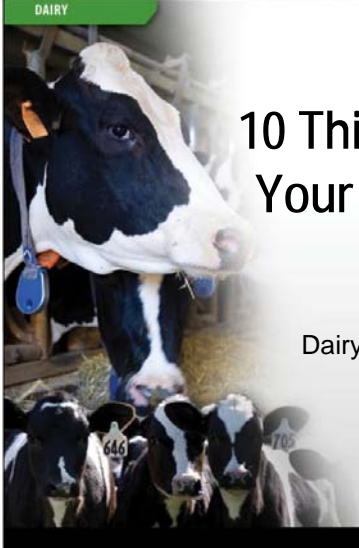



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## 10 Things to Maximizing Your Feeding Program


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## Importance of Maximizing Your Feeding Program

- ♦ 500 cows @ \$7.50/cow/day feed cost = **\$1,368,750.00 annually**
- ♦ If you could save 3% shrink = **\$41,062.50 annually**
- ♦ If you could gain 2% FE = **\$27,375.00**
- ♦ If you could save \$2.50/ton of TMR delivered (110 lbs as fed) = **\$25,093.75 annually**
- ♦ Milk Production, cow health, etc - \$\$\$




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## Points to Think About

- ♦ What is the goal for the feeding operation?
  - Get cows fed?
  - Don't let cows run out of feed?
  - Feed cows to save money?
  - Feed cows to mange special needs?
    - Breed
    - Check fresh cows
    - Preg check

***Feed cows to get the most milk efficiently and keep the cows healthy!***




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## Don't let abnormal become normal!

Begin with the **End in MIND!**

How do we reach our goal?  
Being in Control, verse being Controlled!

Whose going to figure this out?  
**You!**



**Experience is a wonderful thing.**  
It enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.

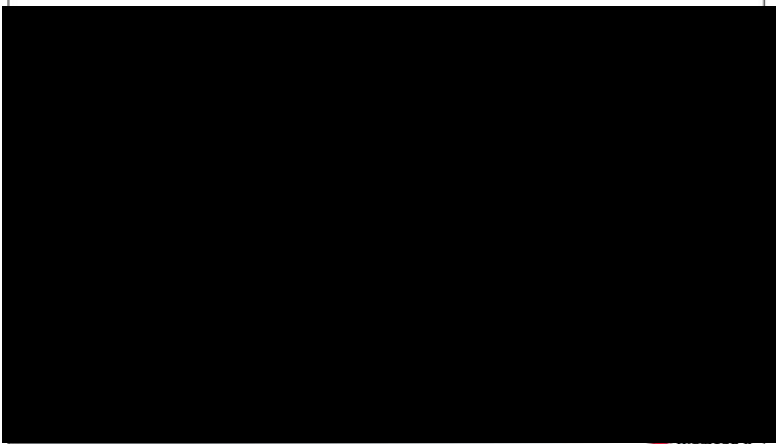
[www.pmcaregivers.com/Humor.htm](http://www.pmcaregivers.com/Humor.htm)

# 1. Get cows fed accurately and on time without running out of feed

## Get cows fed accurately and on time without running out of feed

- ◆ Get the proper ration and amount to the cows
- ◆ Have the ration mixed properly
- ◆ Get it to them on time to meet your management style
- ◆ Cows can't run out of feed, trying to feed to low or no refusal usually doesn't work well

## Cows return to an empty bunk

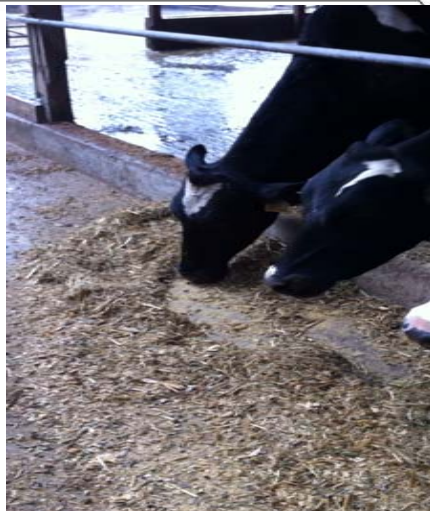


## 2. Stop Sorting

## Stop Sorting

- ◆ If cows sort, we never know what the cows are eating
- ◆ How do you balance a diet when you are guessing what the cows eat
- ◆ Can cause cow health issues
- ◆ Can be a big factor in fresh cow metabolic challenges

## Typical Sorting



**Close-up Diet**






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## Ways to Reduce Sorting

- ◆ Particle length needs to be shorter and all similar in size
- ◆ Ration dry matter needs to be lower
  - Use molasses
  - Water
  - Wet by-products



### 3. Manage push-ups

### Manage Push-ups

- ◆ Feed should be pushed up prior to every delivery
- ◆ Every 1 – 1.5 hours
- ◆ Push-up quick after initial feed drop
- ◆ Feed should be pushed and rolled not just pushed up
- ◆ In many herds this can be the easiest 2 – 3 lbs of milk you can get





## Importance of Feed Push-up

- 1 to 2 hours post-feeding is the most competitive; most displacements
- Push up each ½ hour for the first 2 hours versus once per hour

	2X in 2 hours	4X in 2 hours
<i>DMI, lb/d</i>	41.4	40.1
<i>Milk, lb/d</i>	61.3	65.3
<i>Milk/DMI, lb/lb</i>	1.48	1.63

Armstrong et al.

## Good Push-up Blade



## 4. Maintain Feeding Equipment to Maximize Feed Consistency and Minimize Breakdowns

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How well is this mixing?



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What is causing this?



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Will this mixer mix well?







What do you see wrong with this mixer?

## 5. Manage Forage From Field to Feed bunk

### Manage Forages

- ◆ It starts with selecting the proper hybrid
- ◆ Manage all aspects of getting the forage grown properly
- ◆ Harvest at the optimum time and length
- ◆ Get it in storage properly (packed & covered quickly)
- ◆ Manage the feed out phase

### Manage Forages

- ◆ This is a big area where safety has to be addressed
- ◆ Consistent dry matter checks are critical to keep the ration consistent

*Forage is the base of the ration,  
It has to be managed as such!!*







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## Silage Face Crack



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## 6. Work with Your Nutritionist to Understand the Feeding Program

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## Work with Your Nutritionist

- ◆ Understand what you are feeding and why
- ◆ Be in agreement on ingredients used and take forward positions when feasible
- ◆ Regular animal assessments
- ◆ Monthly Records analysis
- ◆ Set goals for the farm and work together with the team to achieve them

## Work with Your Nutritionist

- ◆ Have contingency ration plans for ingredients
- ◆ Your nutritionist is a key partner in maximizing profit for your operation, you shouldn't micro manage what they do but understand what they are doing and why

## 7. Plenty of fresh clean water available at all times

## Water Tips

- ◆ Keep it clean
- ◆ Available
  - 3" – 3.5"/lactating cow of linear trough space in housing areas
  - 2"/dry cow space
- ◆ Availability on return from parlor, 2'/head
- ◆ What percent of milk is water? This is why it is so important



## 8. Manage Shrink

## Manage Shrink

- ◆ Shrink is the #4 or #5 expense on the farm
- ◆ Shrink occurs in the field all the way to the feed bunk
- ◆ Have a system in place to track it
- ◆ Everyone involved with the feeding operation has to understand and buy in to what shrink is and how to minimize it



## Common Shrink Observed

- ◆ Forages
  - Corn silage – 6.5% - 14.8% w/avg **8.9%**
  - Haylage – 7.6% - 16.1% w/avg **9.8%**
- ◆ Dry grain ingredients
  - 3-sided building – 2.1% - 6.2% w/avg **3.6%**
  - Enclosed building – 1.8% - 4.2% w/avg **2.6%**
  - Bin system – 1.8% - 4.1% w/avg **2.7%**
- ◆ All ingredients combined
  - 6.7% - 9.9% w/avg **7.3%**
  - **Goal is 4% - 5%**

## Why its important to monitor and manage

- ◆ If feed cost is \$7.50/cow/day and you have a 8% shrink
- ◆ That is \$109,500.00 of annual loss on a 500 cow herd (**\$0.60/hd/day**)
- ◆ If you cut shrink to 4%, the annual loss would be \$54,750.00 (**\$0.30/hd/day**)

## 9. Have a Monitoring System in Place to help Manage the Feeding Operation and Measure Success or Failure

## Monitoring System

- ◆ Measure the efficiency of your feeding program
- ◆ On farm cameras that are movable are very valuable
- ◆ Getting cows fed may be the main goal but there are opportunities to accomplish that more efficiently

## Monitoring System

- ◆ Understand all costs associated with making, mixing, and delivering feed
- ◆ There are opportunities to do it more efficiently
- ◆ Keys to making feed efficiently are sizing you mixer and loader properly, having ingredients close in proximity to the mixing area, and having a facility that allows for ease of mixing

## What does it cost to make, mix, and deliver TMR?

- ◆ 38 herds have been analyzed
- ◆ There is a big range identified
  - \$2.87/ton of TMR delivered
  - \$9.92/ton of TMR delivered
- ◆ On a 500 cow herd feeding 110 lbs as fed
  - @ \$2.87/ton that is \$28,807.63 annually
  - @ \$9.92/ton that is \$99,572.00 annually

*What is your operation's cost?*

## 10. Have a contingency plan for every part of the feeding operation

**Things  
do  
happen!**







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## Contingency Plans

- ◆ Always have a plan for every aspect of the feeding operation and have it in writing
- ◆ Every feeding department team member must know the plan to prevent cows from being out of feed
- ◆ Problems will happen, its how we handle them to minimize the negative effects

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## 10 Things to Maximize Your feeding Program

- ◆ Get cows fed accurately and on time without running out of feed
- ◆ Stop sorting
- ◆ Manage push-ups
- ◆ Maintain equipment
- ◆ Manage forage from field to bunk

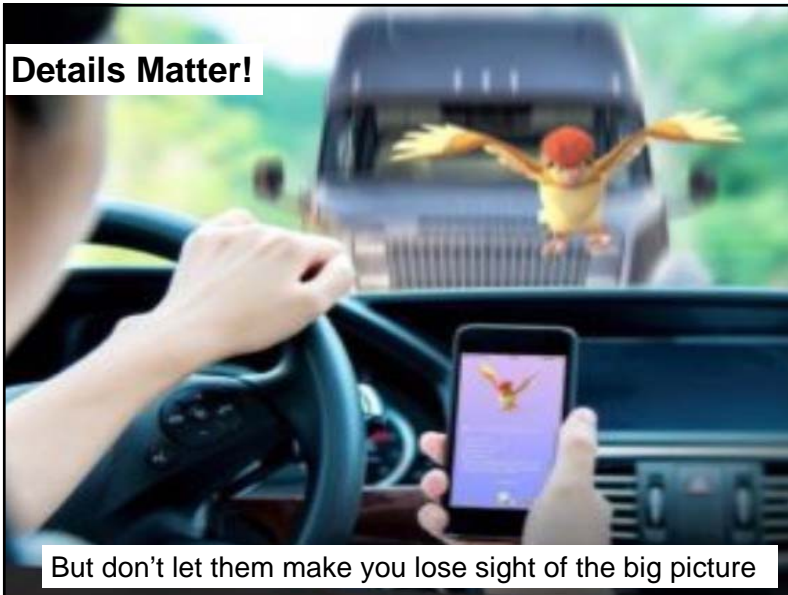


## 10 Things to Maximize Your feeding Program

- ◆ Work with your nutritionist
- ◆ Have plenty of clean fresh water available at all times
- ◆ Manage shrink
- ◆ Implement a monitoring system
- ◆ Have a contingency plan in place



**Details Matter!**



But don't let them make you lose sight of the big picture

**Questions?**

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